



ILMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

MEMORIAL SAFETY TESTING POLICY

ADOPTED AUGUST 2025

To be reviewed AUGUST 2030

1. Ilminster Town Council has a responsibility, under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Occupiers Liability Act 1957, to ensure a safe environment for all visitors, staff and contractors within the Ilminster Cemetery on New Road, Ilminster.
2. As a result, the Health & Safety Executive requires regular safety inspections to be carried out on memorials within the cemetery where Town Council have a maintenance responsibility. The 5-year cycle of testing may see sections of memorials being temporarily closed.
3. Guidelines drawn up by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) will be used for this testing purpose.
4. The checks are carried out by trained staff who make sure that the work is carried out carefully and with due respect. Each memorial will be recorded to indicate that the safety check has been carried out. The record will include the date, photos, the type and condition of the memorial and any action taken.
5. The grave owner(s), the Exclusive Right of Burial (ERB) holder(s), is/are responsible for the memorial and have a duty to keep the memorial repaired and in a safe condition.
6. When a headstone does not pass the test, depending on its location in the cemetery, the headstone will either be laid down, staked and marked with a warning notice, or cordoned off, possibly alongside adjoining headstones with a warning notice.
7. Ilminster Town Council will endeavour to contact the ERB holder as soon as possible to inform them that their memorial has failed the test. Details of memorials that require remedial action will also be posted locally on the cemetery notice board and on social media. No memorial will be removed from a grave space unless they impede on a neighbouring plot.
8. **No memorial can be repaired by the ERB holder. Only memorial masons that are BRAMM and NAAM accredited, will be permitted to carry out repair works after permission has been given by the burial authority, Ilminster Town Council.**
9. **It is recommended that all memorials sited in the cemetery are insured against all risks by the ERB holder, and they should check with their monumental mason or insurer to find out what work would be covered.**
10. If a family member or ERB holder contacts the council to say a warning sign has been placed on their headstone, they should be informed that the immediate priority is to ensure that the cemetery is safe for the public, staff and contractors to enter. Headstones that fail the test will have a notice attached to them and wherever possible, the ERB holder will have been notified via the details on our records. If there was no notification received, it is possible that the Town Council do not have

any current contact details, and they can be updated or arrange for a transfer of ownership of the ERB. If no owner can be found (as in the case of older memorials) Ilminster Town Council will make the memorial safe.

11. Notices will be placed on the cemetery noticeboard by the entrance, and on social media.